

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS : EAGR, BU, US
SUBJECT: PROPOSED JOINT STATEMENT ON AGRICULTURE

ATHENS FOR AGATT

REF: STATE 41422; B) SOFIA 1466; C& STATE 68796; D) SOFIA 603

1. AFTER CONSIDERABLE DELAY, RESULTING IN PART FROM HIGH-LEVEL CHANGES WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND UNEXPECTED NATURWL CALAMITIES WHICH HAVE SERIOUSLY AFFECTED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AMBASSADOR FINALLY MET WITH DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE ISHPZKOV WHO PRESENTED COUNTER-DRAFT TO OUR PROPOSED JOINT STATEMENT ON AGRICULTURE (TEXT SENT REF B).

2. AS DEPARTMENT WILL BE AWARE FROM THE TEXT, MAJOR DIFFICULTY BETWEEN THE TWO DOCUMENTS IS ONE OF EMPHASIS--BULGARIWN TEXT STRESSES EXCHANGE OF TECHNOLOGY, PATENTS, SPECIALISTS, AND MATERIAL, AND MENTIONS ONLY BRIEFLY (ARTICLES I AND II) IMPROVED AGRICULTURAL TRADE. MOST SIGNIFICANT OMISSION, HOWEVER, IS OMISSION OF ANY SPECIFIC
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REFERENCE TO IMPROVED ACCESS OF TRADERS AND AGRICULTURAL ASYOCIATIONS TO PRIMARY USERS AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS. BULGARIAN TEXT GIVES CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT CONTACTS ENVISAGED UNDER AGREEMENT RELATE TO OFFICIAL CONTACTS OF SPECIALISTS AND TECHNICIANS WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED EXCHANGE PROGRAMS.

3. IN ADDITION, CLOSE READING OF ANNEX ON INFORMATION EXCHANGES SHOWS BULGARIAN RELUCTANCE TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO MEANINGFUL INFORMATION EXCHANGE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE BULGARIAN PROPOSAL COMPLETELY OMITTS DATA ON PROJECTED ACREAGE SOWAGE, ESTIMATES OF EXPECTED YIELDS, ECT. INFORMATION INCLUDED IN PROPOSED ANNEX FALLS FAR SHORT OF THAT REQUESTED IN OUR ORIGINAL PROPOSAL. PROPOSED DATA SUFFERS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, FROM BEING HIGHLY AGGREGATED. THUS, INFORMATION ON GRAIN CROPS, OR VEGETABLES, WOULD BE PROVIDED WITH NO INDICATION AS TO SPECIFIC KINDS OF CROPS. INFORMATION OF THIS SORT IS CLEARLY OF ONLY SLIGHT USE TO SPECIALISTS AND RESEARCHERS. BULGARIAN PROPOSAL ON INFORMATION EXCHANGE WOULD NET UY NO INFORMATION THAT IS NOT ALREADY PUBLISHED. OUR ORIGINAL ANNEX WAS BASED ON TWO REQUIREMENTS--THAT THE INFORMATION BE OF USE TO USDA AND OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS, AND THAT THE INFORMATION NOT BE CONSIDERED A STATE SECRET BUT ESSENTIALLY AVAILABLE IN THE OPEN PRESS. NVERTHELESS, WE DO SEE BULGARIAN AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE AN ANNEX ON INFORMATION EXCHANGES AS A POSITIVE SIGN THAT GOB IS WILLING TO PROVIDE AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION TO USG ON REGULARIZED, FORMAL BASIS. WHAT NEEDS TO BE NEGOTIATED IS THE EXTENT IT RESPONDS TO OUR NEEDS.

4. IT APPEARS THAT THERE IS GREAT DEAL OF DISTANCE BETWEEN THE TWO DRAFTS. HOWEVER, GIVEN PROBLEMS FACING BULGARIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AGRICULTURE AND TME GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS TO IMVROVE SITUATION, WE HAVE STRONG BARGAINING POINTS. ISHPEKOV IS ALSO WELL AWARE THAT TSANOV VISIT (WHICH THEY WANT) HINGES ON HAVING ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENT READY FOR SIGNING FOR HIS VISIT IN SEPTEMBER. OUR READING IS THAT GOB DESIRES THIS AGRICULTURAL AGREEMENT, BUT WANTS ASSURANCES THAT IT WILL REAP BENEFITS FROM THE TECHNOLOGY/EXCHANGES SIDE.

5. ON THIS BASIS, WE INTEND TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS ON JOINT STATEMENT IN EFFORT TO REMOVE OBJECTIONALBE LANGUAGE FROM BULGARIAN DRAFT. SPECIFICALLY, WE WILL SEEK TO HAVE EARLY MEETING WITH MIN AG AT WORKING LEVEL IN ATTEMPT TO SOFTEN CONSIDERABLY LANGUAGE ON TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES (ARTICLES 1, 3, 4, 5) OF BULGARIAN DRAFT ALONG LINES PROPOSED IN OUR ARTICLE IV AND TO REINTRODUCE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR CONTACTS WITH BULGARIAN AGRICULTURAL ENTITIES BY PROVATE US FIRMS ANB ORGANIZATIONS. IN ADDITION, WE WILL REINTRODUCE OUR ORIGNINAL ANNEX ON INFORMATION EXCHANGES.

6. WILL APPRECIATE COMMENTS AND GUIDANCE ASAP. IN ADDITION, AGATT PHILLIPSEN MAY WISH TO COMMENT ON BULGARIAN DRAFT.

GARTMOFF

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